



HAPPY NEW YEAR!
 May 2016 bring more positive changes
 For the LGBTQ community!





The Voice of PFLAG Hartford

Caring

Volume 25, No. 1

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AT THE NOVEMBER MONTHLY MEETING: Connecticut State Comptroller, Kevin Lembo, spoke to PFLAG Hartford. For over 20 years his career in health care advocacy, retirement administration and championing fiscal transparency has set him apart in state government service. He has proudly been a visible face and voice for the LGBT community as an out gay man in state politics. He can always be found at important LGBT fundraising, social or advocacy events that matter. We thoroughly enjoyed having him and his family visit with us. Thank you Kevin!

IN THE PFLAG HARTFORD FAMILY:

Good-bye and thank you – to Carole Mackenzie who is leaving the PFLAG Hartford Board after serving for over 2 years. You will be missed, but we look forward to seeing you at the monthly meetings!

Welcome! Our new librarian is Amy Emery. Thank you for stepping up to maintain our wonderful library!

MEMBERSHIP : It's never too late to join PFLAG Hartford! Remember your dues are tax deductible.

<u>MEMBERSHIP DUES:</u>	<u>MONTHLY MEETING REMINDER</u>
Individual Membership: \$25	Tuesday, Jan. 5 – 6:30 p.m. Manchester
Household Membership: \$40	Wednesday, Jan 20 – 7:30 p.m. Hartford
Student/Limited Membership: \$15	Tuesday, Feb 2 – 6:30 p.m. Manchester
	Wednesday, Feb 17 – 7:30 p.m. Hartford
	And...more area meetings listed on last page!
<p><i>(Paid membership includes a one-year subscription to Caring & The National PFLAG newsletter.)</i></p> <p>You can conveniently pay at our website: www.pflaghartford.org/membership.html</p> <p>Or, you can pay by check payable to <i>PFLAG Hartford</i>, P.O. Box 260733, Hartford, CT 06126-0733</p>	

PFLAG is much more than a welcoming place for parents and friends of lesbians & gays. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, queer people and allies are also encouraged to attend our meetings. LGBTQ people come to us with or without their family members... and parents, friends, and allies come with or without their LGBTQ loved ones. PFLAG is for YOU!

PFLAG promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning persons and their families and friends through:

SUPPORT: To cope with an adverse society

EDUCATION: To enlighten an ill-informed public

ADVOCACY: To end discrimination and to secure equal civil rights.

PFLAG provides an opportunity for dialogue about sexual orientation and gender identity and expression, and acts to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity

UPCOMING EVENTS

January 23rd – GirlTwirl LGBT Dance Party Connecticut's longest running LGBT dance party for people over 21 yrs of age. The dance begins at 9:00pm with DJ B Love and a Prix-Fixe Dinner before the dance. The event will be held at the Mattabeset Canoe Club, 80 Harbor Dr., Middletown, CT. Reservations are recommended for the dinner. Cost is \$25.00 for dinner and dance, \$10 dance only. For more information contact Jesse Meucci at (860) 995-0007.

January 30th – Trans, Beyond the Tipping Point with Kate Bornstein at The Real Art Ways, 7:30 p.m. With Laverne Cox on the cover of *Time* magazine, and Jazz Jennings with her own television show, it's clear that the world of transgender is itself in transition. Kate Bornstein speaks to the changing language of trans, the clear division that runs through almost every trans community, and a strategy for unifying all our new and disparate trans identities without "invisibilizing" anyone. Go to <http://www.realartways.org/event/trans-beyond-the-tipping-point-an-evening-with-kate-bornstein/2016-01-30/> for more information.

March 2nd – You Can Play Day with The Bridgeport Sound Tigers Sponsored by GLSEN and True Colors, the cost is \$20 per person and all proceeds go to support the You Can Play Project. The You Can Play project promotes equality in sports. There will be a pre-game panel of LGBT athletes to discuss LGBT issues in sports. Go to <http://www.ourtruecolors.org/Programs/Events/other.html> for more information.

March 18, 19 – Annual True Colors Conference: THE largest LGBTQ youth conference will be held at UCONN in Storrs, CT with two days of workshops for students, parents, educators, and other professionals. For more information go to: <http://www.ourtruecolors.org/Programs/Conference/index.html>

April 30th – Tenth Annual Transgender Lives: The Intersection of Health and Law Conference
The conference is about relationships – relationships with ourselves and relationships with those who interact with us. It is about re-defining these relationships through knowledge and understanding and by helping to erase those misconceptions that have disempowered so many for so long. The conference is also about community – and not just trans and gender non-conforming people but also our allies who support us, the professionals who work with us, our families who care for us, and most especially you. This years theme seeks to raise awareness of the interconnectivity and interdependence of two critical areas to the lives of the trans and gender non-conforming individual. For more information go to <http://www.transadvocacy.org/transgender-lives-conference>

LOOK WHERE PFLAG HARTFORD HAS BEEN!

The annual fundraiser "One Big Event" was a smashing success. Held at the Convention Center, there was great eating, good music, and lots of money raised for the Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective. Here are PFLAG Hartford's Lori Davison and Kaylee Zheng checking in folks.



ONGOING EVENTS

STONEWALL SPEAKERS is an all volunteer speakers' bureau composed of LGBT people and allies dedicated to reducing violence and bias while promoting equality for all. We speak to thousands of Connecticut students and adults annually. Listeners will meet LGBT people and their allies in person; hear candid accounts of their lives; and receive honest, informed answers to any questions they have. Let your high school, college, business, religious group or community group know we are available. For more information please contact coordinator@stonewallspeakers.org.

XX CLUB "Twenty Club" – The Transsexual Support Group of New England meets the 2nd & 4th Saturday of every month from 2-5 p.m. at The Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective, 1841 Broad Street, Hartford, CT www.twentyclub.net.

LIVING SOULFULLY (Men Loving Men In Community) meets the 4th Wednesday of every month, 7:30- 9:30 p.m. at The Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective, 1841 Broad Street, Hartford, CT. 860/278-4163.

Mpower CT – Social gathering for gay and bisexual men ages 18-35 meets the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of every month from 7-9 p.m. at The Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective, 1841 Broad Street, Hartford, CT. 860/278-4163

TRUE COLORS - Friday evenings events 6:30-8:30pm at 30 Arbor St., Suite 201A, Hartford, CT.
1st Friday: Pagan Discussion Group, **2nd Friday:** Movie Night, **3rd Friday:** Gayme Night
4th Friday: Craft Night (Mentoring Activity). Activities are free and open to the community, however donations are gratefully accepted. For more information please email Kimora@ourtruecolors.org

CURRENT ARTICLES:

Gay Groups Are Not Shutting Down, They Are Clearing the Way for the New LGBT Agenda
 By Andrew Park, Huffington Post



Last week the Empire State Pride Agenda, one of the nation's largest LGBT advocacy groups, announced its closure. This came on the same day that staff members of Freedom to Marry finished packing up their cubicles, and a few weeks after cutbacks had been announced by other gay equality groups. Some see these shutdowns as a job well done (now that we have marriage). Others see them as a failure to recognize the continued work to be done (discrimination is still alive, well and legal in most parts of the US).

Gay Groups Shut down cont'd...

A better view is that these changes are necessary in order to reformulate a new American LGBT agenda. For decades the LGBT movement has advocated for legal equality. The new LGBT movement should recognize that equality is necessary, but it is not enough.

Equality is a bedrock principle for Americans and a winning strategy for the LGBT movement. Equality advocacy often targets powerful institutions such as government, employers, healthcare providers or schools. The goal is to get these institutions to treat people equally and fairly. Though **institutions are** important, they are a means to an end. Ultimately people, not institutions, should be the center of the movement's mission.

The goal of the movement should be to help people achieve a better life, not just an equal one. In a formal sense, equality is the right to be treated as well, or as poorly, as everyone else. We know from the experience of the African-American and Women's movement, that legal equality is an unsatisfactory standard. LGBT youth need good educations, not ones that are merely equal to what a bad school can provide. LGBT workers need jobs, not the ability to file a lawsuit or a grievance. LGBT elders need housing, not just a fair chance at being housed.

These priorities are encompassed by the concept of human development, which includes all those things that form a basis of a long, healthy and productive life. LGBT people face the same human development needs as everyone else: Health, education, safety, the ability to form families, the capacity to engage in decent and productive work, having safe housing, participating in government and so on. But for LGBT people, there are probably a few other important considerations such as the ability to express one's gender, the ability to do the ordinary activities of life without having to experience the stress of stigma and prejudice and the ability to decide one's own sexuality.

A new, people-centered LGBT movement will require a new agenda, new skills and new organizations. A shift in the movement agenda would require LGBT groups to link their work to the data about LGBT people in order to ground their priorities in goals that would improve the lives of LGBT people. Take for instance, the issue of workplace equality. Currently, the workplace agenda targets employers by seeking passage of a federal civil rights bill or adoption of employment policies to stop employers from acting discriminatorily. In a human development framework, the goal would be to monitor LGBT workers to see if they are benefiting from the laws. One could imagine a project to eliminate the lesbian wage gap or a program to reduce the unemployment rate among LGBT people of color.

A housing agenda would seek to insure that landlords treat LGBT people fairly. Groups might adopt a goal to cut in half the number of homeless youth, or homeless elderly, or in a particular city or country. Other goals might include increasing the number of LGBT youth completing high school, cut in half the suicide rate among older gay men, decrease transgender poverty by fifty percent, eliminate child poverty for Black gay households and other people-centered missions.

A decade ago we were not able to tell how many LGBT people lived in the United States, much less know about their income, employment and health status. Only in the past decade have we developed the ability to monitor LGBT populations in ways that indicate levels of health, income, employment, family status and so on. Now that LGBT people are included in government surveys and private research efforts, we are able to know more about the lives of LGBT people. But more importantly, without equality protections, we would not have the option of focusing on the welfare of LGBT people.

Many LGBT groups have already adopted people-centered priorities, and those groups can testify that such priorities require new skills, new staff and new leadership. The shutdowns that we are seeing now may be a step along this path.

The Brain isn't Simply "Male" or "Female"
From *The Week Magazine*

Conventional wisdom holds that men and women's brains are "wired" very differently. But a detailed new study has found that most brains have a mix of structures associated with traditional male and female traits and behavior, making every person an individual mosaic of gender-related characteristics.

Israeli researchers analyzed 1,400 brain scans of 169 men and 112 women between 18 and 79 years old, zeroing in on brain regions whose size and pattern of connections are associated with gender differences such as aggression, empathy, risk tolerance, and spatial ability. They found that no more than 6 percent of brains were composed of all "male" or "female" structures. More than half the brains studied, however, contained a mix of these structures, indicating that most people fall somewhere along a gender spectrum, with some strengths and tendencies typically considered male and others female.

The findings, says study author Daphna Joel, are consistent with a growing body of research suggesting that gender identity is formed through a complex interaction of genetic, hormonal, experiential, and environmental factors. "The idea of a unified "masculine" or "feminine" personality turns out not to describe real people." Joel tells LiveScience.com. "It describes stereotypes to which we constantly compare ourselves and each other, but more people are "gender non-conforming" than we generally realize."

Ohio teen's message continues to draw attention to struggles

The Associated Press

Cincinnati —

The message of a transgender teenager who urged people to "fix society" before she stepped in front of a tractor-trailer in southwest Ohio still draws attention — one year later. Leelah Alcorn, 17, of a northeastern Cincinnati suburb, walked onto Interstate 71 in the early morning hours of Dec. 28. Her death was deemed a suicide. A note on her Tumblr blog pleaded for her death "to mean something."

Leelah's selfies and poignant messages on social media hit home among many transgender people. Her death prompted social media discussions, online petitions in support of transgender people, and vigils as far away as London. She was mentioned in a Golden Globe winner's televised speech.

Her case has helped raise awareness both nationally and in her home region. "Leelah's death sparked conversations around water coolers and dinner tables," said Chris Seelbach, Cincinnati's first openly gay councilman. "What does it mean to be transgender? Why are these people asking to be treated equally? That conversation is leading to change."

Officials say counseling and other services have been expanded in Cincinnati in the past year. The Cincinnati Enquirer reports that the Transgender Health Clinic at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center has tripled its caseload to 360 patients in the past year. "Families aren't just shoving this under the rug," said Lee Ann Conard, who oversees the clinic started nearly three years ago. "They're bringing in their kids. No matter where the parents are, no matter how upset they are, they're at least bringing in their kids. They're seeing this is way better than reparative therapy." The Cincinnati city council earlier this month voted to prohibit the therapy, also called "conversion therapy," by health professionals designed to change sexual orientation or gender identity.

The Ohio Highway Patrol reported after its investigation that Alcorn had left a handwritten note on her bed — "I've had enough" — and had done an online search about runaway assistance and a Tumblr search for the word "suicide" before walking onto the interstate. The driver wasn't charged; the Patrol report stated he wasn't speeding, and that he and Alcorn both tested negative for alcohol and drugs.

Chris Fortin, a 2001 graduate of the same Kings High School that Alcorn once attended, led an Adopt-A-Highway effort in her memory. There are two signs with her name on a stretch of I-71.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES DIRECTORY: If you would like to advertise your business/service in *Caring* for one year (6 issues), send your business card and a check for \$50 (made payable to PFLAG Hartford) to: Tracy Martinez, 85 Hilton Drive, East Hartford, CT 06118. Your Patronage of our advertisers, who help us pay the costs of sending the *Caring* newsletter to you, would be greatly appreciated by them and by us. Please mention that you saw their advertisement in *Caring*.

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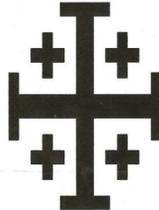
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**CARING IS THE BI-MONTHLY
NEWSLETTER OF
PFLAG HARTFORD**

Editor: Tracy Martinez

Caring welcomes articles, letters and other submissions for publication.

Deadline: 15th of even numbered months.

Connecticut PFLAG Meetings

PFLAG HARTFORD:

Third Wednesday of every month 7:30-9:30 pm
10 Woodland Street, Hartford
PFLAG, Trans, & Trans Youth Group
Contact: www.pflaghartford.org
pflaghartford@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/PFLAGHartford (860) 305-2743

PFLAG in MANCHESTER

First Tuesday of every month, 6:30-8:00 pm
PFLAG and Youth Group
63 Linden Street, Manchester
Contact: pflaghartford@gmail.com

PFLAG in GUILFORD

Second Tuesday of every month, 7:00-8:00 pm
PFLAG and Youth Group
Guilford Youth Services, 36 Graves Street
Contact: greaternewhavenpflag@yahoo.com

PFLAG in NOANK (GROTON)

Second Monday of every month, 7:00 pm
PFLAG and 6:00 pm optional potluck
Noank Baptist Church, 18 Cathedral Heights, Noank
Contact: (860) 447-0884 bjalthen@sbcglobal.net
www.pflagsect.org

PFLAG in NORWALK

2nd Sunday of every month, 3:00-5:00 pm
PFLAG and Youth Groups
Triangle Community Center, 618 West Ave Norwalk
Contact: pflagnorwalk@gmail.com

PFLAG SOUTHWESTERN CT

Hot Line: (203) 874-7365

Central and Western Massachusetts

PFLAG in NORTHAMPTON

When: Second Tuesday of every month from 6-8 pm
Where: Northampton at Northampton Crossing
325 King St. (Pioneer Valley Family
Medicine conference room)

Contact: 413-625-6636 or jcmalinski48@gmail.com

STRAIGHT SPOUSE SUPPORT NETWORK:

*In Connecticut and Western Massachusetts
Monthly Support Group, Third Sunday,
West Hartford, CT.*

Contact Jane Harris at (413) 625-6636 or
jcmalinski48@gmail.com
or at www.straightspouse.org

FOR OTHER PFLAG LOCATIONS

Visit PFLAG National's Home Page at
www.pflag.org and click on "Find a Chapter"